

REMARKS

The above Amendments and these Remarks are in reply to the Office Action mailed January 21, 2005. Claims 1-25 were pending in the Application prior to the outstanding Office Action. Claims 1, 2, 12, 13 and 15 are being canceled, and claims 3, 4, 6, 8-10, 14, 16-18, 21 and 25 are being amended. Claims 3-11, 14 and 16-25 remain for the Examiner's consideration. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

I. Information Disclosure Statement

It was stated in the Office Action that previously submitted references 9 and 26 were not considered because they did not include a date. A Supplemental IDS is attached herewith, including dates for these references. Applicants respectfully request that these references be considered.

II. Summary of Claim Rejections

Claims 1, 2, 6-8, and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being obvious over Chodora (U.S. Patent No. 6,147,501).

Claim 9 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Chodora (U.S. Patent No. 6,147,501), in view of Blackham (U.S. Patent No. 6,188,968).

Claims 12, 13 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Chodora (U.S. Patent No. 6,147,501), in view of Bradley et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,524,281).

Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Chodora (U.S. Patent No. 6,147,501), in view of Bradley et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,524,281), and further in view of Blackham (U.S. Patent No. 6,188,968).

III. Summary of Allowed and Allowable Claims

Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for indicating that **claims 21-25** are allowed. Applicants would also like to thank the Examiner for indicating that **claims 14**

and 17-20 would be allowable if rewritten in independent formal including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim.

Applicants' undersigned representative called the Examiner on February 2, 2005 to inform the Examiner that **claims 3-5** were not discussed in the Office Action. The Examiner informed Applicants' representative that **claims 3-5** are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent formal including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim.

IV. Summary of Amendments

While Applicants respectfully do not agree with the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejections, in order to expedite issuance of a patent, Applicants have made the following amendments:

- canceled claims 1, 2, 12, 13 and 15;
- amended claim 3 to be in independent formal including all of the limitations of its original base claim and any intervening claim;
- amended claims 6, 8 and 9 such that they now depend from claim 3;
- amended claim 10 to be in independent formal including all of the limitations of its original base claim and any intervening claim;
- amended claim 14 to be in independent formal including all of the limitations of its original base claim and any intervening claim;
- amended claim 16 such that it now depends from claim 14; and
- amended claim 17 to be in independent formal including all of the limitations of its original base claim and any intervening claim.

Applicants have also made some minor amendments to claims 4, 16, 18, 21 and 25, to better define the claimed embodiments of the invention. Such minor amendments are not narrowing.

V. Conclusion

- Independent claim 3, and its dependent claims 4-9 should now be allowable.
- Independent claim 10 should now be allowable.
- Independent claim 14, and its dependent claim 16 should now be allowable.

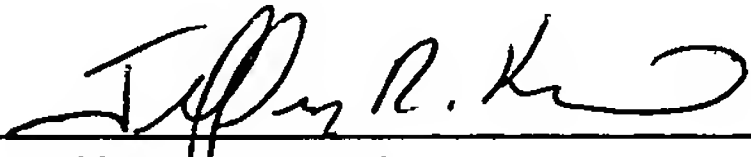
- Independent claim 17, and its dependent claims 18-20, should now be allowable.
- Independent claim 21, and its dependent claims 22-25, have already been indicated as being allowed.

In light of the above, it is respectfully requested that all outstanding rejections be reconsidered and withdrawn. The Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned if he can assist in any way in expediting issuance of a patent.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any underpayment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 06-1325 for any matter in connection with this reply, including any fee for extension of time, which may be required.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 2/15/05

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